

News from the FPPC



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2010 Gubernatorial Campaign Spending Shatter's Records *Whitman tops list of expenditures and self-financed candidates*

According to research released today by the California Fair Political Practices Commission, the state's political watchdog, California's 2010 gubernatorial general election has become the most expensive general election race in the history of the state—and the nation.

With just over one week of campaign spending until Election Day, Democrat Jerry Brown and Republican Meg Whitman have spent a combined \$87,497,759 during July 1 through October 16, 2010. This places the two candidates' combined primary and general election spending at **more than \$188.1 million**, with untold millions yet to be spent prior to the November 2 election.

In addition to the candidates' own spending, during June 9 through October 20, 2010, the combined efforts of political committees making independent expenditures of at least \$10,000 spent **more than \$25 million** on efforts to assist these two candidates.

"Campaign spending in California is like a runaway train barreling down a mountain," commented FPPC Chairman Dan Schnur. "When you combine independent expenditures with direct candidate spending by Whitman, Brown and Steve Poizner, nearly a quarter of a billion dollars has been spent so far in this year's bid for governor."

The previous record was set in 2002 when Democratic Governor Gray Davis and Republican Bill Simon nearly spent a combined \$80 million (in 2010 dollars) for the entire general election cycle of July 1 through December 31, 2002. At that time, limits on direct contributions to candidates did not exist in California.

"FPPC staff has worn out three sets of calculators keeping up with the record levels of spending in this election," said Schnur. "Reasonable people can disagree

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about the role of money in politics, but we believe it's critically important to supply voters with as much information as possible about the sources of funding for the television ads and brochures that they're assaulted by in the weeks before they cast their ballots."

In addition to setting a combined spending record in the general election, other spending milestones for the 2010 gubernatorial election include:

- At this point in the campaign, Whitman's combined primary and general election contributions of more than \$141.5 million make her California's top self-funded candidate. Al Checchi's 1998 primary election efforts landed him in second place with \$50.9 million (in 2010 dollars), while the previous record for a self-financed general election candidate was the \$6.7 million (in 2010 dollars) spent by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2006.
- As of October 16, 2010, combined spending of all Democrat and Republican candidates for Governor, since 1978—the first statewide election since enactment of the Political Reform Act—has reached nearly **\$1 billion** (in 2010 dollars). See spreadsheet.
- Another potential spending record could be reached once the final votes are tallied, if the number of votes cast for Whitman cause her to exceed the \$15.63 (in 2010 dollars) per vote spending record established by Governor Gray Davis in 2002.

Schnur noted that in general elections, victory usually goes to the biggest spender. "Our research shows that in the past 32 years—Democrat Tom Bradley in 1982—is the only general election candidate to outspend his opponent and lose the election."

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